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In part V the author gives fifty questions and answers in theory of accounts and eleven problems and solutions in practical accounting. Then follow quiz questions on the various chapters of the book.

The author's aim was not to cover the field of general accounting nor to dwell upon its legal side, but to give the public "a comprehensive statement of accounting principles and methods." In this he has succeeded.

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*An Elementary Manual of Statistics.* By ARTHUR L. BOWLEY. London: Macdonald & Evans, 1910. 8vo, pp. vi+215. 5s. net.

Modern development in statistical science has been so characteristically an elaboration of the more advanced forms of mathematical analysis that what may be called the common sense of statistics has seemed to be neglected. We have had books of ability on statistical analysis, and some excellent critical compilations of statistical results, incidentally outlining the methods by which such results are attained. But satisfactory books designed to teach the critical use of simple statistical tools and to educate the quantitative sense have been almost or quite lacking. One turns, therefore, hopefully to an *Elementary Manual* put forth by a writer of reputation.

Mr. Bowley has stated well and compactly the purpose of his book. It "is intended for the use of those who desire some knowledge of statistical methods and statistical results without going deeply into technicalities or undertaking mathematical analysis"—for the laymen who have to interpret facts which they encounter in statistical form. "It is also designed as a first course for students who wish to proceed further in the subject. . . ." No one who can perceive the difficulty of making one small book serve as a fundamental treatise and also as a conspectus of miscellaneous statistical results will be surprised that Mr. Bowley has not been wholly successful.

The book is in two parts. Part I is devoted to the elements of method. Part II is descriptive of statistical resources and results. This second part amounts in effect to a brief and rather casual guide to the British official statistics, with occasional tables deduced from them. For anyone not himself British this insularity of scope is a defect which makes that part of the book—nearly two-thirds—comparatively uninteresting. Even for the Britisher one would suppose that reference to foreign work would be instructive, and apt to do away with a little of that air of finality with which English writers have been wont to quote, for example, the registrar-general's reports. It is almost absurd, even if the book be written for home use exclusively, to find that a two-page list of selected titles of books and public documents embraces the title of no work published outside of England.

The first part of the book is of the more general serviceability. It has chapters on the "Nature and Use of Statistics," "Accuracy and Approximation," "Averages," "The Accuracy of Averaging and other Arithmetical Processes," "Use of Diagrams," "Tabulation," "Sampling," "Rules for Using Published Statistics," and "Methods of Statistical Analysis." The brevity of treatment is unfortunate and makes disconnected and hard reading, which

might have been in part obviated by attention to topical headings. Since the thread of exposition is less clear than could have been wished one regrets that the index is scanty. Some subjects have been omitted which deserve treatment. Thus, hints on the choice of colors and forms of line in graphic work would help to obviate the familiar necessity of redrawing authors' charts and diagrams before they can be reproduced; and mention of some ordinary statisticians' devices for checking the accuracy of computations and transcriptions, distinguishing calculated results from data in records, etc., would serve a practical purpose. On the other hand, the author has well emphasized the menace of fallacious accuracy and of unintelligent resort to graphic statement. He has repeatedly laid emphasis on simple principles of the greatest importance, which are ordinarily all too little observed. He still further provides for the inculcating of these principles by an appendix of exercises based on the several chapters. Hence the first part of the book has merits which recommend it for the use of beginners in statistics. If only Mr. Bowley had developed this portion of his work to perhaps double its actual scale by clarifying and re-enforcing the exposition, it could be very warmly welcomed. As it is, it adds another to the respectable list of statistical books which are partly useful.

J. A. F.

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*Report of the Massachusetts Commission on Old Age Pensions, Annuities and Insurance.* Boston: Wright & Potter, 1910. 8vo, pp. 409.

Massachusetts has long been a leader in labor legislation in this country and thus naturally is early in the field with an investigation of this subject now attracting so much attention. The Report includes a careful statistical study of the aged poor in Massachusetts, a descriptive account of existing systems of old-age pensions, insurance, and annuities in various countries, a study of the proposed plans for old-age pensions, a discussion of the general problem, an estimate of the cost of old-age pensions in Massachusetts, a study of the question of municipal pensions, and the final conclusions and recommendations.

The final recommendations of the commission, signed by all the members, though two dissent from particular features, are against the establishment by the state of any general system of old-age pensions. The first reason for this conclusion is the belief that if such a system is ever adopted in this country it will have to come through the federal government rather than through state legislation. Other special considerations leading to this conclusion were: a desire to test more thoroughly the experiment for voluntary insurance under public administration provided for by the state law of 1907; a belief that the problems of sickness and accident insurance should be thoroughly dealt with first; and the absence of any appreciable demand for old-age pensions as well as of any alarming amount of old-age destitution. (Investigation showed the number of paupers of all ages per 1,000 of the population is only 8.5 in Massachusetts as compared with 24.2 in the United Kingdom, while the number of paupers 65 years of age and over per 1,000 of population of the same age is only 31.7 in Massachusetts against 172 in the United Kingdom.) Finally,